THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Regional Director, Kanpur, had earlier sought vide his letter dated 29-7-19865, the explanation of M/s. Apparel Export Promotion Council for the alleged violation of conditions of the licence issued under Sec. 25 of the Companies Act, 1956, in not complying with the provisions of the Memorandum of Association of the Council. The reply of the Council dated 8-8-1985. has been examined and in the light of legal advice, the Regional Director. Kanpur, vide his Notice dated 20-11-1985, has called upon the Council to show cause within 30 days as to why the licence granted under Sec: 25 of the Companies Act, 1956, should not be revoked for violating the provisions of the Memorandum of Association of the Council.

Oil Exploration in Bay of Bengal

839. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that besides ONGC, some foreign companies had explored oil in the Bay of Bengal in the past;

(b) if so, the quantum of foreign exchange involved so far in such explorations;

(c) whether Government are thinking of entrusting more off-sore explorations to these companies; and

(d) if so, details of the areas and the amount of foreign exchange involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Two foreign companies namely, M/s. Carlsberg Natomas, USA and M/s. Asamera Group of companies of Canada had undertaken drilling operations in the Bay of Bengal in 1976-77/1977-78 respectively.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

(c) to (d) Government is considering inviting fresh bids from foreign oil companies for exploration and production of oil. The terms and conditions are yet to be finalised.

Delay in supply of Cooking Gas

840. DR. MOHD. HASHIM KIDWAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cooking gas connection holders in the country have to wait for weeks for the supply of cooking gas by the dealers and on that account those gas connection holders are put to considerable inconvenience;

(b) if so, what action Government propose to take against such dealers who put the gas connection holders to considerable inconvenience; and

(c) what remedial measures Government propose to take in order to stop this malpractice and also to ensure the regular supply of gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA): (a) to (c) LPG distributors are under instructions from the oil companies to supply refills within 48 hours of a customer request. While this normally does happen, there are times when delays occur in some areas owing to problems in respect of bottling, industrial relations, transportation etc. The oil companies endeavour to solve these problems as speedily as possible in order to restore normalcy of supplies. Action under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines, ranging from caution/warning letters and debit for missing equipment to terminattion of distributorships is taken against erring distributors by the oil companies.